First Flight Companion

Reading, Vocabulary, Grammar & Puzzles — Class 10 (2026–27)

One complete workbook: comprehension, vocabulary, solved exercises, grammar, and crosswords
Original content built around the NCERT First Flight chapters — for classroom and self-study use

Name: _____
Class & Section: _____
School: _____
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Part 1 — Chapter Companions

1. A Letter to God

Notice how the writer builds suspense around Lencho's letter and its unexpected outcome.

Reading Guide

Section	Textbook Pages	What to Focus On
Full chapter	pp. 1–5	Notice how the writer builds suspense around Lencho's letter and its unexpected outcome.

Comprehension Questions

Q1. Why does Lencho write a letter to God?

Answer: His entire crop is destroyed by a sudden hailstorm, and he needs money to sow his field again before the next season, so he turns to the one source of help he trusts completely.

Q2. What does Lencho's reaction to the money he receives reveal about his character?

Answer: His anger at receiving less than he asked, and his suspicion that the post-office staff took some of it, shows an unshakeable, almost naive faith in God combined with very little trust in people.

Q3. How does the postmaster respond to Lencho's first letter?

Answer: Touched by the farmer's faith, he organises a collection among his staff and friends so that the letter's request is not left completely unanswered.

Q4. What is ironic about the story's ending?

Answer: The very faith that moved the postmaster to help is the same faith that makes Lencho accuse the post-office employees of stealing, showing how blind faith can turn ungrateful.

Q5. What does the story suggest about the power of belief?

Answer: It suggests belief can move people to real, practical kindness, even while showing that unquestioning faith can blind a person to the goodness already shown to them.

Vocabulary

English Word	Hindi Meaning	Simple Clue
Hailstorm	ओलावृष्टि	sudden fall of ice pellets that destroys crops
Harvest	फ़सल	the crop gathered at the end of a growing season
Despair	निराशा	total loss of hope
Postmaster	डाकपाल	official in charge of a post office
Conviction	दृढ़ विश्वास	a firmly held belief
Ungrateful	कृतघ्न	not thankful for help received
Sow	बोना	to plant seeds in the ground
Gully	नाला	a small channel cut by running water

Solved Exercise (with Reasoning)

Q1. What does the title 'A Letter to God' suggest about the story's theme?

Answer: It signals that the story is centrally about faith — a letter addressed to God rather than to any earthly authority frames the whole plot around belief and its limits.

Reasoning: Titles in this kind of story usually name the central symbolic act; here the act of writing itself carries the theme.

Q2. Why might the writer have chosen a farmer as the protagonist?

Answer: A farmer's livelihood depends directly on nature and chance, making faith a natural response to circumstances beyond his control.

Reasoning: The choice of profession grounds the story's exploration of faith in a believable, high-stakes situation.

Q3. What does the postmaster's decision to help reveal about ordinary kindness?

Answer: It shows that quiet, unglamorous generosity often comes from people with limited means, and that faith in others can be self-fulfilling.

Reasoning: His action isn't dramatic, but it directly changes the outcome, which the story frames as meaningful rather than incidental.

Grammar in Context — Prepositions & Conjunctions

- Prepositions (in, on, at, through, despite) show relationships of place, time or manner.
- Conjunctions (because, although, so, and, but) join clauses to show cause, contrast or addition.

Practice Exercise

1. The farmer worked hard ___ (through/at) the entire growing season.

2. ___ (Because/Although) the hail destroyed his crop, Lencho still believed in God's help.

3. He walked ___ (into/onto) the post office to hand in his letter.

4. The postmaster helped him ___ (despite/into) having very little money himself.

5. Lencho was disappointed, ___ (so/but) he wrote an angry follow-up letter.

Answer Key

1. through

2. Although

3. into

4. despite

5. so

2. Nelson Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom

Pay attention to how the writer links personal courage to a nation's collective freedom.

Reading Guide

Section	Textbook Pages	What to Focus On
Full chapter	pp. 6–14	Pay attention to how the writer links personal courage to a nation's collective freedom.

Comprehension Questions

Q1. What does the writer mean by saying freedom is indivisible?

Answer: He means that no one is truly free while others remain oppressed — the oppressor is also trapped by the system of oppression, so liberation must include everyone.

Q2. What ideals does the writer say he was prepared to die for?

Answer: A democratic and free society in which all people live together in harmony with equal opportunities, regardless of race.

Q3. Why does the writer describe both the oppressed and the oppressor as robbed of humanity?

Answer: Because a system built on hatred and inequality dehumanises everyone involved — the oppressor loses compassion just as the oppressed lose freedom.

Q4. What does the inauguration ceremony symbolise in this extract?

Answer: It symbolises a historic transfer of power achieved without bloodshed, marking the formal end of institutionalised racism in the country.

Q5. What obligations does the writer say came with his new freedom?

Answer: The responsibility to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others, not just to enjoy his own.

Vocabulary

English Word	Hindi Meaning	Simple Clue
Apartheid	रंगभेद	system of racial segregation in South Africa
Oppression	उत्पीड़न	prolonged unjust treatment or control

English Word	Hindi Meaning	Simple Clue
Inauguration	उद्घाटन समारोह	formal ceremony marking a leader taking office
Tyranny	अत्याचार	cruel and unjust use of power
Emancipation	मुक्ति	the process of being freed from restriction
Dignity	गरिमा	the quality of being worthy of respect
Obligation	दायित्व	a moral or legal duty
Patriotism	देशभक्ति	devotion to one's country

Solved Exercise (with Reasoning)

Q1. Why does the writer see his own freedom as incomplete without others' freedom?

Answer: Because he views liberty as a shared condition — as long as any group is denied dignity, the entire society remains unfree in spirit.

Reasoning: This connects the personal narrative to a broader political philosophy about interdependence.

Q2. What role does courage play in the extract?

Answer: Courage allows the writer to keep believing in reconciliation rather than revenge, even after decades of unjust treatment.

Reasoning: The text repeatedly ties his resilience to a forward-looking, not vengeful, vision of freedom.

Q3. How does the writer's tone change when describing the new nation?

Answer: It becomes hopeful and reflective, contrasting the long struggle with the possibility of a shared, harmonious future.

Reasoning: The shift in tone marks the emotional turning point between past suffering and present achievement.

Grammar in Context — Active & Passive Voice

- In the passive voice, the object of an active sentence becomes the subject, and 'by + agent' is optional.

- Use passive voice to emphasise the action or result rather than who performed it.

Practice Exercise

1. Change to passive: 'Apartheid denied millions of people their basic rights.'

2. Change to passive: 'The nation elected Mandela as its first Black president.'

3. Change to passive: 'Oppression cannot destroy a person's inner freedom.'

4. Change to active: 'The struggle for equality was led by countless unnamed heroes.'

Answer Key

1. Millions of people were denied their basic rights by apartheid.

2. Mandela was elected as the nation's first Black president.

3. A person's inner freedom cannot be destroyed by oppression.

4. Countless unnamed heroes led the struggle for equality.

3. Stories About Flying

Compare how fear is overcome differently in the two short stories that make up this chapter.

Reading Guide

Section	Textbook Pages	What to Focus On
Full chapter	pp. 15–22	Compare how fear is overcome differently in the two short stories that make up this chapter.

Comprehension Questions

Q1. What fear does the young seagull have to overcome?

Answer: It fears that its wings will fail and it will fall into the sea, so it refuses to fly even though its family has already left the ledge.

Q2. How is the seagull finally persuaded to fly?

Answer: Hunger and a moment of instinctive panic push it off the ledge, and it discovers mid-air that flying comes naturally once it commits to the attempt.

Q3. What challenge does the pilot face in the second story?

Answer: He becomes disoriented flying through storm clouds, losing all sense of direction and risking a fatal crash.

Q4. How is the pilot eventually guided to safety?

Answer: Another pilot, flying nearby, notices his trouble and guides him calmly back onto the correct course until he can land.

Q5. What idea connects both stories in this chapter?

Answer: Both show that overcoming fear or danger in the air often depends on a combination of instinct, guidance, and the courage to keep going despite uncertainty.

Vocabulary

English Word	Hindi Meaning	Simple Clue
Altitude	ऊँचाई	height above sea level
Cockpit	कॉकपिट	compartment where a pilot sits

English Word	Hindi Meaning	Simple Clue
Compass	दिशा सूचक यंत्र	instrument used to find direction
Navigator	मार्गदर्शक	crew member who plots the flight path
Disoriented	दिशाभ्रमित	having lost one's sense of direction
Propeller	प्रोपेलर	rotating blades that drive an aircraft
Plummet	तेज़ी से गिरना	to fall or drop suddenly and steeply
Instructor	प्रशिक्षक	a person who trains and teaches a skill

Solved Exercise (with Reasoning)

Q1. Why does the writer set the first story near a cliff ledge?

Answer: The height and open sky create a natural, tense setting for a young bird's first, frightening attempt at flight.

Reasoning: Setting mirrors the internal conflict — a physical edge matches the character's psychological edge.

Q2. What does the pilot's rescue suggest about teamwork in dangerous situations?

Answer: It suggests that even skilled individuals can lose control under pressure, and that calm outside guidance can be the deciding factor in survival.

Reasoning: The story deliberately shows competence failing alone but succeeding with support, to make this point.

Q3. How do both stories treat the theme of first-time fear differently?

Answer: The seagull's fear is instinctive and resolved through necessity, while the pilot's fear is technical and resolved through communication and skill.

Reasoning: Contrasting resolutions highlight that courage takes different forms depending on the nature of the danger.

Grammar in Context — Clauses (Adverb & Noun Clauses)

- An adverb clause modifies a verb and often begins with 'when', 'because', 'although', 'if'.
- A noun clause functions as a subject or object and often begins with 'that', 'what', 'whether'.

Practice Exercise

1. Identify the clause type: 'When the storm cleared, the pilot finally saw land.'

2. Identify the clause type: 'What the young seagull needed most was courage.'

3. Combine using 'because': 'The bird was afraid. It had never flown before.'

4. Combine using 'although': 'The pilot was lost. He remained calm.'

Answer Key

1. Adverb clause of time.

2. Noun clause (subject of the sentence).

3. The bird was afraid because it had never flown before.

4. Although the pilot was lost, he remained calm.

4. From the Diary of Anne Frank

Look for the moments where the diary itself becomes a character the writer confides in.

Reading Guide

Section	Textbook Pages	What to Focus On
Full chapter	pp. 23–30	Look for the moments where the diary itself becomes a character the writer confides in.

Comprehension Questions

Q1. Why does the writer decide to keep a diary?

Answer: She wants a true confidante, since she feels that none of her many acquaintances qualify as a real friend she can be completely honest with.

Q2. What name does she give her diary, and why does this matter?

Answer: She names it as if it were a person, which shows how deeply she wanted companionship during a period of enforced isolation.

Q3. How does the writer describe the gap between her outward and inward self?

Answer: She says people see her as a chatterbox and a joker, while her private diary reveals a far more thoughtful, serious side that others rarely notice.

Q4. What does the diary entry suggest about the value of solitude?

Answer: It suggests that solitude, though difficult, can lead to genuine self-reflection that surface-level friendships rarely allow.

Q5. Why might the diary format make the narrative feel especially personal?

Answer: Because it is addressed directly to a confidante, the reader feels let into private, unfiltered thoughts rather than a polished, public account.

Vocabulary

English Word	Hindi Meaning	Simple Clue
Confidante	विश्वासपात्र	a person one shares secrets and feelings with
Solitude	एकांत	the state of being alone

English Word	Hindi Meaning	Simple Clue
Superficial	सतही	existing only at the surface, not deep
Candid	स्पष्टवादी	truthful and straightforward
Adolescence	किशोरावस्था	the period of transition from childhood to adulthood
Contradictory	विरोधाभासी	involving opposing qualities or ideas
Chatterbox	बातूनी व्यक्ति	a person who talks a great deal
Genuine	सच्चा	truly what it is said to be; sincere

Solved Exercise (with Reasoning)

Q1. Why does the writer feel that ordinary friendships are not enough?

Answer: Because they stay superficial — full of fun and daily talk, but never touching the deeper thoughts she most wants to share.

Reasoning: The text repeatedly separates 'having fun' from 'being known', which motivates the need for the diary.

Q2. What does keeping a diary reveal about self-awareness at a young age?

Answer: It shows an unusually mature ability to recognise the difference between how one is perceived and who one actually is.

Reasoning: This level of self-reflection is presented as remarkable precisely because of the writer's youth.

Q3. How does isolation shape the tone of the diary entries?

Answer: It gives the entries an intimate, sometimes lonely tone, since the diary must substitute for the human company she is denied.

Reasoning: Tone follows directly from circumstance — confinement makes the writing more introspective than it might otherwise be.

Grammar in Context — Direct–Indirect Speech (extended)

- When reporting speech written in a diary, treat it as a statement: shift tense, pronouns, and time references.

- Reporting verbs can be varied (wrote, confided, admitted) instead of always using 'said'.

Practice Exercise

1. Anne wrote, "I want to go on living even after my death."

2. She confided, "I don't want to be like most girls of my age."

3. Anne wrote in her diary, "Paper has more patience than people."

4. She admitted, "I have not spoken a word of truth to anyone here."

Answer Key

1. Anne wrote that she wanted to go on living even after her death.

2. She confided that she did not want to be like most girls of her age.

3. Anne wrote in her diary that paper had more patience than people.

4. She admitted that she had not spoken a word of truth to anyone there.

5. Glimpses of India

Notice how each section uses food and land together to sketch a region's identity.

Reading Guide

Section	Textbook Pages	What to Focus On
Full chapter	pp. 31–40	Notice how each section uses food and land together to sketch a region's identity.

Comprehension Questions

Q1. What role does rice play in Indian food culture, according to this chapter?

Answer: It is described as a staple eaten in some form at almost every meal, showing how central it is across many regional cuisines.

Q2. How does the chapter link Goan cuisine to its history?

Answer: It connects the heavy use of coconut and certain cooking styles to centuries of Portuguese influence on the region.

Q3. Why might the writer describe some rural routines as monotonous yet meaningful?

Answer: Because repeated daily tasks like cooking staple food can feel dull on the surface, but they carry deep cultural and emotional significance.

Q4. What does the chapter suggest about regional diversity within one country?

Answer: It suggests India's regions differ sharply in food, land use, and custom, yet remain connected through shared traditions of hospitality and community.

Q5. How does describing food help the writer paint a picture of a place?

Answer: Food becomes a lens for culture — through ingredients and cooking habits, the reader learns about geography, history, and daily life all at once.

Vocabulary

English Word	Hindi Meaning	Simple Clue
Plantation	बागान	large estate where crops like coconut are grown
Staple	मुख्य आहार	a basic, regularly eaten food item

English Word	Hindi Meaning	Simple Clue
Nostalgic	यादों में खोया	feeling wistful affection for the past
Monotonous	नीरस	tediously repetitive and lacking variety
Cuisine	पाक शैली	a style or method of cooking
Hospitality	आतिथ्य	friendly and generous treatment of guests
Coastal	तटीय	located near the sea
Harvest	फ़सल कटाई	the season of gathering ripened crops

Solved Exercise (with Reasoning)

Q1. Why does the chapter move between different regions rather than staying in one place?

Answer: Moving between regions lets the writer show the range of Indian food culture, avoiding the impression that any single region represents the whole country.

Reasoning: Structure follows purpose: a chapter about diversity needs multiple, contrasting examples.

Q2. What does the chapter imply about the connection between land and food?

Answer: It implies that geography — coastline, climate, soil — directly shapes what a region eats and how it cooks.

Reasoning: Every food example given is tied back to a specific landscape feature, reinforcing this link.

Q3. How does nostalgia function in the chapter's descriptions?

Answer: It gives the food descriptions an emotional weight beyond nutrition, connecting meals to memory, family, and childhood.

Reasoning: Purely factual writing about ingredients would not carry the same warmth; nostalgia adds that personal dimension.

Grammar in Context — Degrees of Comparison & Adjectives

- Comparative adjectives (+ 'er'/'more') compare two things; superlatives (+ 'est'/'most') compare three or more.
- Descriptive adjectives add detail about size, origin, or quality of a noun.

Practice Exercise

1. Coastal Goan food is ___ (spicy - comparative) than food from the northern hills.

2. Rice is one of the ___ (common - superlative) staples across the country.

3. The plantations looked ___ (green - comparative) after the monsoon rains.

4. Of all the regional cuisines, this one felt the ___ (unique - superlative).

Answer Key

1. spicier

2. most common

3. greener

4. most unique

6. Madam Rides the Bus

Track how the girl's feelings shift from fear to confidence over the course of the journey.

Reading Guide

Section	Textbook Pages	What to Focus On
Full chapter	pp. 41–49	Track how the girl's feelings shift from fear to confidence over the course of the journey.

Comprehension Questions

Q1. Why is this bus journey significant for the young girl?

Answer: It is her first time travelling completely alone outside her village, marking an early, formative step toward independence.

Q2. What emotions does she experience before and during the ride?

Answer: She feels a mix of apprehension and excitement, unsure of what to expect but curious about the unfamiliar world outside her home.

Q3. How does the conductor's behaviour affect her experience?

Answer: His patience and kindness help ease her nervousness, showing her that strangers can also offer quiet support.

Q4. What does the journey teach her about the world beyond her village?

Answer: It shows her that life outside is larger and more varied than she imagined, and that she is capable of facing it on her own.

Q5. Why might the writer choose a bus ride, rather than a bigger event, to explore this theme?

Answer: A small, ordinary journey makes the emotional growth feel realistic and relatable, showing that courage often develops through everyday experiences, not just dramatic ones.

Vocabulary

English Word	Hindi Meaning	Simple Clue
Conductor	कंडक्टर	person who collects fares on a bus
Apprehensive	आशंकित	anxious about something that may happen

English Word	Hindi Meaning	Simple Clue
Bewildered	हतप्रभ	perplexed and confused
Solitary	एकाकी	done or existing alone
Curiosity	जिज्ञासा	a strong desire to know or learn
Independence	स्वतंत्रता	freedom from being controlled by others
Destination	गंतव्य	the place to which someone is travelling
Outskirts	बाहरी इलाका	the outer parts of a town or city

Solved Exercise (with Reasoning)

Q1. Why does the girl's mood shift over the course of the story?

Answer: As small, kind interactions accumulate during the journey, her initial fear gradually gives way to curiosity and quiet confidence.

Reasoning: The shift is built gradually rather than suddenly, matching how real confidence tends to grow.

Q2. What does the story suggest about first experiences of independence?

Answer: It suggests such experiences are often small in scale but large in emotional impact, shaping how a child sees her own capability.

Reasoning: The story's modest setting — a single bus ride — carries outsized meaning for the character's growth.

Q3. How does the writer use the outside world (village, road, passengers) to mirror her inner journey?

Answer: As the physical distance from home increases, her emotional distance from fear also increases, aligning the outer and inner journeys.

Reasoning: This is a common narrative technique: external movement reflecting internal change.

Grammar in Context — Question Formation & Tag Questions

- Wh-questions begin with a question word and invert the subject and auxiliary verb.
- Tag questions are short questions added to a statement, using the opposite polarity of the main verb.

Practice Exercise

1. Form a wh-question: 'The conductor collected the tickets.' (ask about who)

2. Form a yes/no question: 'She had never travelled alone before.'

3. Add a question tag: 'The bus was crowded, ___?'

4. Add a question tag: 'She won't feel afraid next time, ___?'

Answer Key

1. Who collected the tickets?

2. Had she never travelled alone before?

3. wasn't it

4. will she

Part 2 — CBSE Syllabus Grammar (10 Marks)

Covers the five grammar areas prescribed in the Class 10 English (Code 184) syllabus, with rule summaries and CBSE Gap-Filling / Editing / Transformation style practice, contextualised using First Flight themes.

Determiners

• Determiners (a/an, the, this/these, some/any, each/every, much/many, etc.) come before a noun to specify it.

• Use 'a/an' for a non-specific singular countable noun; 'the' for something already known or unique.

• 'Much' is used with uncountable nouns, 'many' with countable plural nouns; 'a few/a little' show a small positive amount.

Practice Exercise

1. Lencho looked up at ___ (a/the) sky, watching the clouds gather over his farm.

2. There wasn't ___ (much/many) hope left after the hailstorm destroyed the crop.

3. ___ (Each/Every) letter he wrote reached the same kind-hearted postmaster.

4. Nelson Mandela believed ___ (a/the) freedom of one man is tied to the freedom of all.

5. The young seagull had ___ (a few/a little) doubts before its first flight.

6. Anne Frank kept ___ (a/an) diary that became her closest companion.

7. Goa has ___ (much/many) coconut plantations along its coast.

8. The little girl had never travelled ___ (this/these) far from her village alone.

Answer Key

1. the

2. much

3. Every

4. the

5. a few

6. a

7. many

8. this

Tenses

- Present, past and future tenses each have simple, continuous, perfect and perfect-continuous forms.

- Use the past simple for a completed action at a definite past time; the present perfect for a past action with present relevance.

- The past continuous describes an action in progress when another action happened.

Practice Exercise

1. By the time the rain stopped, the hailstorm ___ (already / destroy) the entire harvest.

2. Mandela ___ (fight) against apartheid for most of his adult life.

3. The seagull ___ (watch) the other birds fly when it decided to try itself.

4. Anne Frank ___ (write) in her diary every single day while in hiding.

5. Every year, families in Goa ___ (harvest) the coconut crop in early summer.

6. The little girl ___ (never / ride) a bus alone before that day.

7. While the conductor ___ (collect) tickets, she watched the world go by.

8. By next year, she ___ (grow) old enough to travel anywhere on her own.

Answer Key

1. had already destroyed

2. fought

3. was watching

4. wrote

5. harvest

6. had never ridden

7. was collecting

8. will have grown

Modals

- Modals (can, could, may, might, must, should, will, would, shall) express ability, permission, possibility, necessity or advice.

- 'Must' shows strong obligation; 'should' gives advice; 'may/might' show possibility; 'can/could' show ability or polite requests.

Practice Exercise

1. A farmer ___ (must/might) have faith even when the harvest fails.

2. You ___ (should/can) always stand up for what is right, as Mandela did.

3. A young bird ___ (must/can) learn to fly with patience and practice.

4. Readers ___ (may/should) never fully know a person from their diary alone.

5. Visitors ___ (must/might) enjoy the coconut-based dishes of Goa.

6. A child ___ (should/must) not travel alone without informing an adult, generally speaking.

Answer Key

1. must

2. should

3. can

4. may

5. might

6. should

Subject–Verb Concord

- A singular subject takes a singular verb; a plural subject takes a plural verb.
- Collective nouns (family, team, crowd) usually take a singular verb when acting as one unit.
- With 'either…or' / 'neither…nor', the verb agrees with the nearer subject.

Practice Exercise

1. Neither the farmer nor his neighbours ___ (was/were) prepared for the storm.
2. The committee ___ (was/were) unanimous in honouring Mandela's courage.
3. Either the pilot or the instructors ___ (was/were) responsible for the training.
4. Each of the diary entries ___ (reveal/reveals) a new side of Anne's character.
5. The family of coconut farmers ___ (work/works) together during harvest season.
6. The conductor, along with the passengers, ___ (was/were) kind to the frightened child.

Answer Key

1. were
2. was
3. were
4. reveals
5. works
6. was

Reported Speech

- Statements: shift tense back one step, change pronouns, and adjust time/place words (today→that day, here→there).

- Questions: use 'if/whether' for yes-no questions, or the question word itself for wh-questions; word order becomes statement order, and the question mark is dropped.

- Commands and requests: use 'to' + base verb for commands, and 'not to' + base verb for negative commands; reporting verbs like 'ordered', 'requested', 'advised' replace 'said'.

Practice Exercise

1. Statement — Lencho said, "I need a hundred pesos to sow my field again."

2. Statement — Mandela said, "I am ready to give my life for this cause."

3. Question — The instructor asked the pilot, "Can you see the runway?"

4. Question — She asked her friend, "Why do you keep a diary?"

5. Command — The conductor said to the girl, "Sit down and hold the rail."

6. Request — She said to the driver, "Please stop at the next village."

Answer Key

1. Lencho said that he needed a hundred pesos to sow his field again.

2. Mandela said that he was ready to give his life for that cause.

3. The instructor asked the pilot if he could see the runway.

4. She asked her friend why she kept a diary.

5. The conductor told the girl to sit down and hold the rail.

6. She requested the driver to stop at the next village.